

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 17-27 have been withdrawn. Please amend claims 2-5 and 7, and cancel claims 1, 8-16, and 28 as set forth in the listing of claims that follows:

What is claimed is:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) ~~The hinge assembly as in claim 1,~~ A hinge assembly for coupling a sliding door of a vehicle to a drive unit via a cable for sliding the sliding door from an open position to a closed position, the drive unit causing the hinge assembly to slide within a guide track as the door moves between the open position and the closed position, the hinge assembly comprising:
 - a first hinge portion;
 - a second hinge portion, said first hinge portion being pivotally secured to said second hinge portion;
 - a cable attachment being secured to said second hinge portion; and
 - a guide surface disposed on a surface of said first hinge portion, said guide surface being configured to make contact with a portion of said cable when said second hinge portion is in a first orientation with respect to said first hinge portion and said cable no longer makes contact with said guide surface as said second hinge portion moves from said first orientation to a second orientation with respect to said first hinge portion;
 - wherein said cable have an end secured to said cable attachment; and
 - wherein said cable attachment moves closer to said first hinge assembly portion as said second hinge portion moves from said first orientation to said second orientation.
3. (Currently Amended) The hinge assembly as in claim [[1]] 2, wherein said first hinge portion is pivotally secured to said second hinge portion by a pivot pin.

4. (Currently Amended) The hinge assembly as in claim [[1]] 2, wherein said first hinge portion further comprises a plurality of rollers for being slidably received within the guide track.
5. (Currently Amended) The hinge assembly as in claim [[1]] 2, wherein ~~the other end of said cable is coupled to the drive unit and said cable attachment is coupled to the sliding door~~ and said first orientation of said second hinge portion corresponds to the open door position and said second orientation of said second hinge portion corresponds to the closed door position.
6. (Original) The hinge assembly as in claim 5, wherein movement of said second hinge portion from said first orientation to said second orientation is caused by said first hinge portion traveling in a curved portion of the guide track.
7. (Currently Amended) The hinge assembly as in claim [[1]] 2, wherein the guide track is a center guide track and said cable attachment is secured to a rear portion of the sliding door.
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Cancelled)
12. (Cancelled)
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Cancelled)
15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Withdrawn) A method for providing a closing force to a sliding door of a vehicle, comprising:

securing one end of a cable to the sliding door;

securing another end of said cable to the motor drive unit for providing a pulling force to said cable; and

pivotally securing a first hinge portion to a second hinge portion, said second hinge portion being secured to the sliding door and said first hinge portion being slidably received within a guide track having a curved portion;

wherein said cable makes contact with a guide member of said first hinge portion when said first hinge portion is not traveling within said curved portion and wherein a direct force is applied to a portion of the sliding door when said first hinge portion is traveling in said curved portion and said cable no longer makes contact with said guide member.

18. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 17, wherein said portion of the sliding door is a rear portion of the sliding door.

19. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 17, further comprising:

securing one end of another cable to said first hinge portion and securing another end of said another cable to the motor drive unit for providing a pulling force to said another cable, said pulling force to said another cable being opposite in direction to the pulling force applied to said cable.

20. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 17, wherein the sliding door is aligned with a door opening in the vehicle when said cable no longer makes contact with said guide portion.

21. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 17, further comprising:

positioning a pulley at an end of said guide track having said curved portion, said pulley being located to align a portion of said cable with a point of securement of said end of said cable to the door.

22. (Withdrawn) A method for closing a sliding door of a vehicle, comprising:
aligning the door with a door opening of the vehicle;
directly providing a pulling force to a rear portion of the door by a cable that is aligned with a surface of a pulley and said rear portion of the door, wherein said pulling force causes the door to travel inward into the door opening.
23. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 22, wherein said pulling force is applied when a latching mechanism of the door is in a secondary latching position and said pulling force causes said latching mechanism to translate into primary latching position wherein the door is fully received within the door opening.
24. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 23, wherein said pulling force is applied by a motor drive unit of a center guide track.
25. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 22, wherein said pulling force is applied by a motor drive unit of a center guide track.
26. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 22, wherein said pulling force is applied when a latching mechanism of the door is in a primary latching position wherein the door is fully received within the door opening.
27. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 26, wherein said pulling force is applied by a motor drive unit of a center guide track.
28. (Cancelled)